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# WAR IN PEACE

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# WAR IN PEACE

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## This week in War in Peace

Since the development of the Gulf region as a major source of oil supplies to the Western world, dominance of that area has been a priority of the United States' global strategy. Until 1979 the key ally of the United States in the Gulf was the Shah of Iran, primed with Western military equipment to be the 'policeman' of the region. Yet the Shah faced mounting popular hostility, both from left-wingers and Islamic fundamentalists, against which his military armoury proved useless.

After the Shah's dramatic fall in January 1979 hostility to the United States became a dominant theme of the new Islamic Republic's policy. Washington was consequently forced to seek a new military capacity for intervention in and around the Gulf to defend its interests.

## Next week's issue

In December 1979 the Soviet Union moved a large combat force into Afghanistan and immediately became involved in a major counter-insurgency campaign for which its army was almost totally unprepared.

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**Walter Hoffmann** is an Australian writer who specialises in problems of security and international relations in East Asia and the Pacific.

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# The fall of the Shah

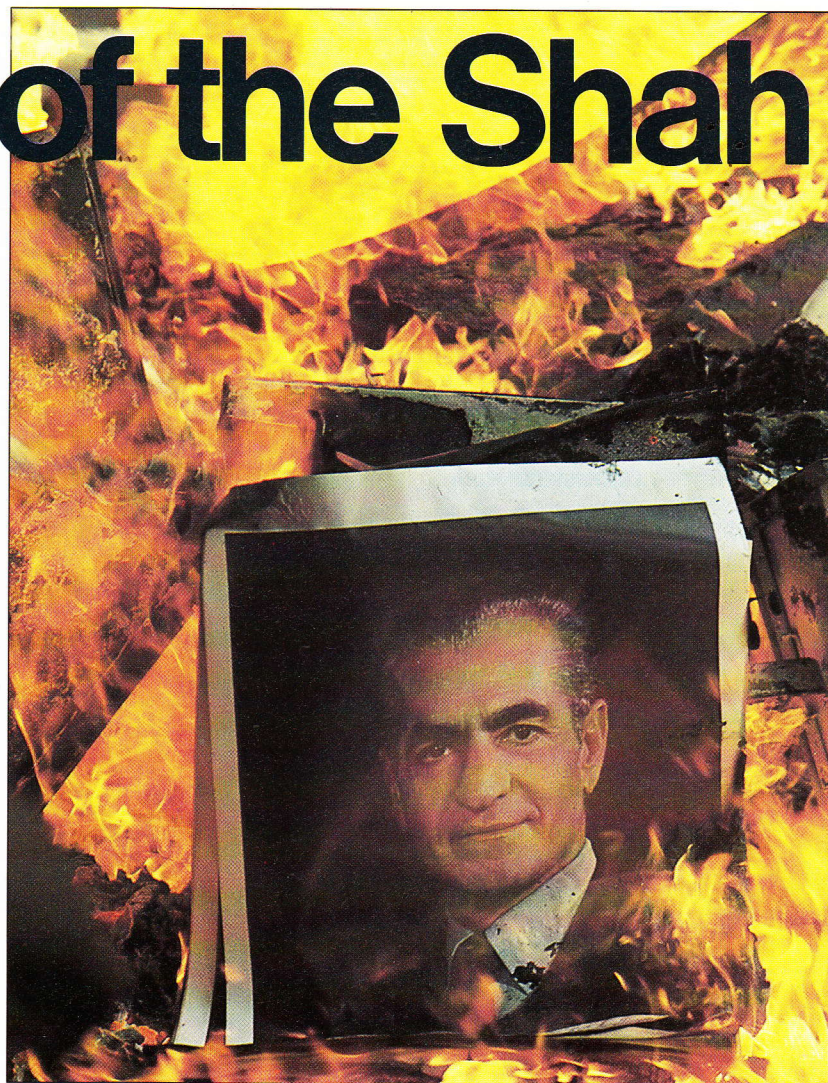
The Iranian revolution  
1978-79

The strongman of Iran and master of the mightiest military machine in the Gulf region, Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, owed his Peacock throne twice over to foreign intervention. The first time was in 1941, when British and Soviet troops had entered Iran to depose his pro-Axis father, Reza Shah Pahlavi. The second occasion was in 1953, when the Shah was returned to the throne he had hastily fled by an American-inspired coup, which ousted his enemy, the nationalist Iranian prime minister, Dr Mohammed Mossadegh.

In the wake of the events of 1953, the badly shaken Shah turned increasingly to his omnipresent secret police, SAVAK (Sazeman Etelaat va Amniat Keshvar – State Security and Information Organisation), which ruthlessly suppressed all open opposition, and pursued the Shah's enemies abroad as well as at home. By the late 1970s, it was estimated that SAVAK employed at least 20,000 people and controlled a network of over 180,000 informers and spies. SAVAK's methods, which included the routine use of torture and executions, gained the Shah an unsavoury reputation, and provoked worldwide protests at Iranian human-rights violations.

Reforms introduced by the Shah in 1961, including land reform, female emancipation and the secularisation of the state were designed to promote the modernisation of Iran, and certainly helped impel the country into the 20th century. But at the same time, this 'White Revolution' alienated the powerful Muslim clergy, who not only lost their own extensive landholdings, but also denounced the reforms as anti-Islamic. The most prominent of these Muslim traditionalists was the Ayatollah Ruhallah Khomeini, who used his position as a respected teacher of Islamic theology as a propaganda platform against the Shah. The clash between the clergy and the Shah reached a peak in 1963, when the storming of Khomeini's theological school in Qom by Imperial Guards triggered off widespread riots and demonstrations. Khomeini was arrested and many demonstrators killed; the Shah denounced what he called an alliance of 'black reactionaries' (the Muslim clergy) and 'dark red forces' (the communist Tudeh Party). Khomeini continued actively to oppose the Shah after his release in March 1964, but failed to mobilise mass support and became increasingly isolated. By November 1964, the Shah felt strong enough to order Khomeini's expulsion from Iran. After a brief period in Turkey, Khomeini settled in Iraq, where he spent the following 14 years as a political exile, denouncing the Shah and all his works.

A second source of opposition to the Shah emerged in 1965, with the foundation of the Sazeman-e-Mujahidin-e-Khalq-e-Iran (People's Mujahidin Organisation of Iran) by a small group of left-wing Muslim graduates of Tehran University. Several had







taken part in the 1963 pro-Khomeini demonstrations, but later moved beyond Khomeini's conservative traditionalism to a radicalism derived from a combination of Islam, Marxism and the example of Third World national liberation movements. The Mujahidin soon developed close links with the Palestine Liberation Organisation, in whose camps they received their first military training, and by 1971 they were beginning to lay the foundations for an urban guerrilla movement. Their first operations included the assassination of a senior American military adviser and of the Tehran chief of police.

The organisation quickly became the number one target for SAVAK, and by late 1971 the entire leadership had been captured – by May 1972 they had all been either executed or tortured to death. The blow was severe, but the Mujahidin simply went deeper underground, rebuilding their shattered organisation and gradually learning the dangerous lessons of urban guerrilla warfare. As the Mujahidin organisation grew it began to cooperate with the Marxist Fedayeen-e-Khalq in a series of terrorist operations aimed at showing that resistance to the Shah was possible, and that SAVAK was not invincible.

Both the Mujahidin and Fedayeen were able to tap the growing reservoir of discontent with the Shah's new Iran which was widespread not only among the urban poor and the growing working class, but also among the affluent and socially privileged middle class which was itself largely a product of the Shah's programme of modernisation. The corruption and ostentation of the Shah's court contrasted dramatically with the condition of the large numbers of unemployed urban poor, who had been drawn to the shanty towns, such as those which surrounded Tehran, by the lure of work and a share in the prosperity of an increasingly remote and Westernised society. Their disillusionment combined with the desire of the expanding educated administrative and industrial middle class for a share in the power which remained concentrated exclusively in the hands of the Shah, who did little to win support outside of the elite, but increasingly alienated opinion by the brutality of his suppression of all dissent.

Pressure for a liberalisation of the Iranian regime



came increasingly from her main ally and arms supplier, the United States, after the election of Jimmy Carter to the White House in 1976. President Carter saw Iran as a test case for the human-rights orientated foreign policy which he hoped to initiate for the United States. American pressure did persuade the Shah to introduce a number of liberalising measures, including the announcement of free elections to be held in the summer of 1979.

The American-inspired liberalisation, however, unleashed a wave of protests against the regime, which became caught in the classic dilemma of modernising autocracies, which find that each step towards liberalisation is seen as a sign of weakness, and each reassertion of authority as a provocation to new protests and opposition. The trigger for the protests was a government-inspired press attack on the Ayatollah Khomeini which appeared on 7 January 1978. The attack followed shortly after the mysterious death of the Ayatollah's eldest son, which many attributed to SAVAK, and led to demonstrations in the religious centre of Qom which were fired on by troops, causing many deaths.

The 40-day mourning period laid down by the Shi'ite religion was widely observed, and its end was marked by a renewed round of demonstrations and clashes between protestors and security forces. In Tabriz, over 100 demonstrators were either killed or wounded by the police, and the enraged crowd attacked cinemas and banks as the symbols of the Westernised Iran the Shah hoped to construct. This anti-Western nationalist Islamic aspect of the opposition to the Shah was encouraged by cassette recordings of messages from Khomeini which were being illicitly distributed throughout the country, calling on the

Previous page: As the fires of Islamic revolution swept Iran during the winter of 1978-79, the power of the Shah turned to ashes.

Left-wing and fundamentalist opponents of the Shah united in huge mass demonstrations which led to bloody confrontations with the Iranian Army. Above: A victim of the first such clash in Tehran on 4 September 1978. Top: The Jaleh Square massacre on the following day led to the deaths of 500 demonstrators and convinced many of the need to overthrow the Shah.

Top right: The austere figure of the Ayatollah Khomeini became the universal symbol of the opposition to the Shah. Right: The Shah responded by employing troops against unarmed demonstrators, but the willingness of many to accept martyrdom only demoralised the army and hastened the final collapse of the regime.





faithful to rise up against the Shah as their religious duty.

The depths of the latent distrust and hatred which existed towards the Shah were most clearly illustrated after an arson attack upon the crowded Rex cinema in Abadan on 19 August 1978, during which some 600 people were burned to death. Although subsequent evidence pointed strongly to the responsibility of fanatical Islamic fundamentalists, many Iranians accepted without question the allegation that the attack had been carried out by the Shah's agents in order to discredit the opposition. The Rex killings initiated a new wave of attacks on banks and cinemas, and protest demonstrations took on the character of fanatical confrontations with the security forces, each yielding its own crop of martyrs, and the continually repeated 40-day mourning periods were transformed into a process of organisation and propaganda, resulting in ever larger protests which the security forces were increasingly powerless to prevent.

### Demonstrations and death

The first mass demonstrations to be held in Tehran took place on 4 September 1978, when over 100,000 people took to the streets in an unprecedented challenge to the Shah. The government reacted by banning all demonstrations, but was unable to prevent a second march on 7 September. The regime responded by placing the capital under martial law, and soldiers were ordered to shoot to kill.

The following day, however, demonstrators again assembled in the Jaleh Square in south Tehran. The Tehran correspondent of the French newspaper *Le Figaro* described what followed, as the soldiers opened fire: 'This is not a fight; this is a massacre. A firing squad at work. The street one minute beforehand darkened with people, is strewn with bodies, shoes, trampled banners, the wounded crawling toward each other, struggling to reach each other.' An estimated 500 demonstrators had been slaughtered. It was a turning point that marked the transition from protest to revolution.

Tehran University, which reopened towards the end of September, became the organisational centre for revolutionary activity, and the virtually open base





of the Mujahidin and Fedayeen guerrillas who not only helped organise demonstrations and meetings, but also trained many people in the use of weapons. Meetings, exhibitions and the production of a torrent of propaganda material transformed the university into a blatant challenge to the Shah's authority. On 4 November a rally of over 100,000 high school and university students was attacked by units of the Shah's Imperial Guards – 65 demonstrators were killed and up to 400 wounded. Tehran witnessed the most violent protests yet, and by the following day a nationwide state of martial law had been imposed.

The prime minister, Sharif Emami, who had been appointed as a half-hearted gesture to liberalisation, was removed from office, and the Iranian chief of staff, General Azhari, took his place. Tehran University was occupied by troops and control of the campus became a key issue in what was rapidly becoming an all-out struggle for power between the Shah and the loose opposition coalition that ranged from Islamic fundamentalists loyal to Ayatollah Khomeini, through moderate liberals of the National Front, to the more radical Mujahidin and the pro-Moscow communists of the Tudeh Party. While a group of lecturers occupied classrooms at the university, students staged a sit-in at the Ministry of Education from 23 December, which escalated to massive demonstrations involving over 400,000 when troops shot and killed one of the student protesters on 26 December.

### The flight of the Shah

The martial law regime appeared increasingly desperate as the various strands of the opposition united behind the austere and intransigent figure of Ayatollah Khomeini, now based in Paris. Isolated incidents of fraternisation between troops and demonstrators began to be reported, and anti-Shah slogans were chanted nightly from the rooftops in a constant provocation to the army patrols in the streets below. General Azhari, who had suffered a heart attack late in December, was replaced as prime minister by former opposition National Front politician Shapur Bakhtiar on 29 December, but the situation had already deteriorated far beyond cosmetic cabinet changes. On 13 January 1979, demonstrators marched on the occupied university and took it over as the 'Central Fort of the Revolution'. Three days later the Shah and his wife left Iran by air for the final exile.

Within hours the news of the Shah's departure had reached the streets of the capital, where hundreds of thousands demonstrated their joy and relief. The Bakhtiar government continued to oppose change by armed force, however, and the runway of Tehran airport was blocked by army tanks in order to prevent the much heralded return of Khomeini. By 1 February the runway barriers had been removed, however, and the Ayatollah landed to the rapturous reception of the people of Tehran, who lined the route of his triumphant entry into the capital in their millions.

Two centres of authority now existed in Iran: that of the Shah, represented by the totally isolated person of Prime Minister Bakhtiar; and that of Ayatollah Khomeini, to whom the majority of the Iranian people now looked for leadership, and who appointed Mehdi Bazargan as prime minister of a provisional government on 5 February. The armed forces remained for the most part loyal to the Shah, however, and formed a last barrier to a peaceful transition. A final bloody



resolution appeared inevitable.

The uprising which sealed the fate of the Shah's regime was set in motion by events which occurred at an Iranian Air Force base at Farahabad, in south Tehran. A filmed report of the arrival of Khomeini in Tehran being shown on television was greeted by a group of air force technicians and cadets with chanted slogans in support of the Ayatollah. Imperial Guards loyal to the Shah who were present attacked the airmen and laid siege to them in their barracks.

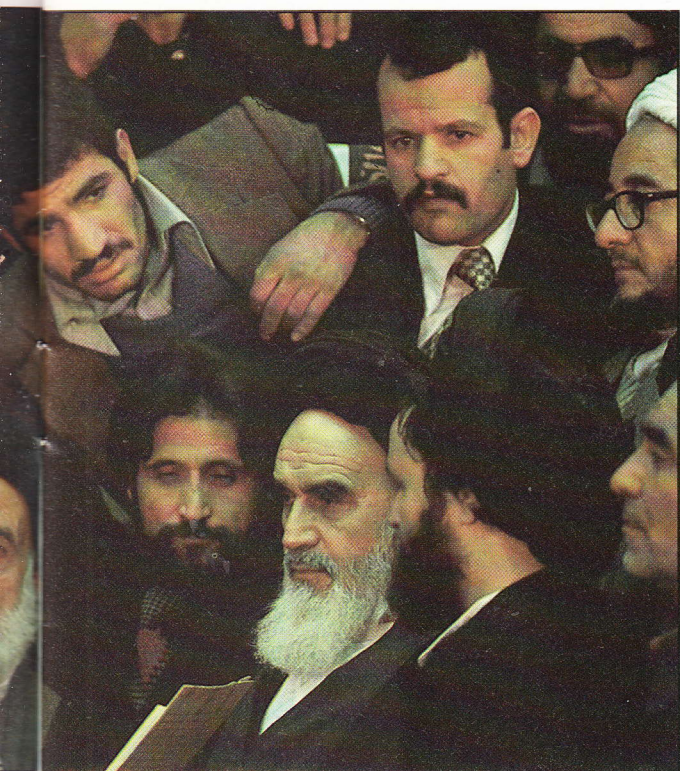
News of the fighting at Farahabad spread rapidly throughout the capital, and the airmen appealed for help against the Imperial Guards. Armed Mujahidin and Fedayeen rushed to the scene of the fighting, and took up positions to the rear of the Imperial Guards who suddenly found themselves under attack from all sides. The airmen distributed weapons from their armoury to the large numbers of civilians who had come to their aid, and fighting became general throughout Tehran as the revolutionaries moved to cut off units of the Imperial Guards which were moving to the support of their comrades.

The insurgents, armed with light automatic weapons and molotov cocktails, faced the tanks of the Iranian Army, but the morale of the government troops had already been weakened by the months of confrontation with fanatical unarmed demonstrators who had welcomed martyrdom in the fight against the Shah. Resistance began to crumble, and by 11 February the insurgents were moving over to the offensive

Above: Left-wing guerrillas and armed supporters of the Ayatollah round up agents of SAVAK, the Shah's hated secret police. Above centre: The arrival of Khomeini at Tehran airport on 1 February 1979 to a rapturous welcome.

Top right: The bodies of Iranian generals, supporters of the Shah, killed by the firing squads of the new Islamic Republic. Right: The Shah flees Iran on 16 January 1979. After taking refuge in a number of countries, including the United States, he finally died of cancer in Egypt in July 1980.





and had begun to attack SAVAK buildings, police stations and the capital's five main military bases. News of the insurrection had already spread to the rest of Iran and fighting broke out in all the country's major cities. Late on 11 February the fall of Tehran to the insurgents was announced on radio and television. The rule of the Shah was at an end.

The triumphant Islamic revolution now turned to the grim business of visiting retribution upon the senior army officers who had been responsible for propping up the Imperial regime and for the bloody suppression of opposition. General after general faced firing squads of the new Revolutionary Guards who had taken over responsibility for security. Loyal to Ayatollah Khomeini, they were distinct from the guerrilla groups which had played such an active part in the fighting, and provided the Islamic fundamentalists with the means to impose their stamp on Iran.

Divisions within the anti-Shah coalition soon began to re-emerge when the Shah himself had been removed from power. Though the Tudeh Party continued to support the socially conservative but violently nationalistic and anti-Western Islamic Republic established in the wake of the revolution (until the Muslim fundamentalists themselves turned on the communists and destroyed them), conflict with the Mujahidin and with Iran's various national minorities soon exploded into open warfare. The Mujahidin, driven once more underground, resorted to terrorist tactics in a violent struggle over the course of the Iranian revolution, while national minorities, such as the Kurds, who had played an active part in the struggle against the Shah, found that their hopes of equality and self-determination were to be shattered against the even more aggressive Persian chauvinism of Iran's new Islamic rulers. The 1979 revolution had substituted a dictatorship of the Mullahs for the autocracy of the Shah – a dictatorship which in many respects was even more brutal than that which it had replaced.

**Walter Hoffmann**





# Chronology 1976-80

## EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

1976

January

5 **Northern Ireland** Ten Protestant textile workers killed by terrorist group at Whitecross, Armagh.

May

9 **West Germany** Red Army Faction leader Ulrike Meinhof found dead in her prison cell.

28 **United States** concludes treaty with Soviet Union on the control of underground nuclear explosions for non-military purposes.

July

21 **Eire** British ambassador Christopher Ewart-Briggs assassinated.

November

1 **United States** Jimmy Carter elected president.

1977

January

12 **Northern Ireland** Secretary of State Roy Mason announces the 'Way Ahead' policy - 'Ulsterisation'.

May

11 **Soviet Union and United States** begin SALT II talks in Geneva.

16 **Soviet Union** Leonid Brezhnev becomes president as well as general secretary of Communist Party.

17 **Nato** agrees to a 3 per cent annual rise in defence spending.

23 **Netherlands** South Moluccan terrorists seize hostages in train and school.

June

11 **Netherlands** Dutch Marines and police release hostages from South Moluccans.

30 **United States** President Carter announces cancellation of B-1 bomber programme.

July

7 **United States** President Carter reveals neutron bomb in production.

September

5 **West Germany** Industrialist Dr Hanns-Martin Schleyer kidnapped by Baader-Meinhof group.

October

13 **West Germany** Lufthansa flight hijacked to Mogadishu, Somalia, by West German and Palestinian terrorists, demanding release of Baader-Meinhof prisoners.

18 **West Germany** GSG9 anti-terrorist squad successfully assaults hijacked aircraft at Mogadishu. Three Baader-Meinhof leaders, including Andreas Baader, found dead in their cells.

19 **West Germany** Kidnapped industrialist Dr Schleyer found dead.

November

2 **Soviet Union** President Brezhnev offers to halt nuclear testing.

1978

January

4 **Britain** Representative of PLO in London Said Hammami assassinated.

February

17 **Northern Ireland** Fire bomb at La Mon restaurant kills 12.

March

16 **Italy** Aldo Moro, five times prime minister, kidnapped by Red Brigades.

May

9 **Italy** Body of Aldo Moro found.

September

15 **Britain** Baader-Meinhof terrorist Astrid Proll arrested in London.

1954

December

13 **United States** announces resumption of diplomatic relations with China.

23 **United States and Soviet Union** SALT talks end without agreement.

1979

March

22 **Netherlands** British ambassador assassinated by IRA.

30 **Britain** Airey Neave MP assassinated by INLA.

May

4 **Britain** Margaret Thatcher becomes first woman prime minister.

18 **United States and Soviet Union** Presidents Carter and Brezhnev sign SALT II treaty in Vienna.

August

27 **Ireland** Earl Mountbatten killed by terrorist bomb at Mullaghmore in the Irish Republic; 18 British paras killed by terrorist bombs at Warrenpoint in Northern Ireland.

December

6 **Netherlands** Dutch parliament rejects Nato plan for stationing of cruise missiles in the Netherlands.

12 **Nato** approves stationing of 572 missiles in Europe.

1980

January

1 **United States** President Carter recalls US ambassador from Moscow following Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

April

28 **Europe** European Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (END) founded.

30 **Britain** Iranian embassy seized by terrorists.

May

4 **Yugoslavia** President Tito dies after long illness.

5 **Britain** SAS commandos storm Iranian embassy and release hostages.

June

19 **Britain** Government announces intention to deploy cruise missiles at Greenham Common and Molesworth.

September

12 **Turkey** Demirel government overthrown in military coup led by General Kenan Evren.

October

24 **Poland** Independent trade union organisation 'Solidarity' recognised by government.

November

4 **United States** Ronald Reagan elected president.

## SOUTHEAST ASIA

1976

June

24 **Vietnam** officially reunified.

30 **Thailand** South East Asian Treaty Organisation (Seato) closes Bangkok headquarters and ceases to exist.

October

20 **Thailand** Military coup.

1978

November

3 **Vietnam and Soviet Union** sign a Treaty of Friendship.

December

27 **Vietnam** sends troops into Kampuchea.

1979

January

7 **Kampuchea** Vietnamese troops occupy Phnom Penh, and set up government under Heng Samrin.

February

17 **Vietnam** Chinese troops invade the northern provinces of Vietnam.

23 **Vietnam** Soviet military supplies airlifted to the Vietnamese.

March

5 **Vietnam** Long San abandoned to Chinese forces after fierce fighting.

6 **Vietnam** Chinese begin withdrawal from Vietnam.

20 **Vietnam** Chinese withdrawal completed.

## SOUTH ASIA

1976

June

29 **Seychelles** gains independence, remaining in Commonwealth.

1977

April

21 **Pakistan** Martial law imposed in major cities.

June

5 **Seychelles** President Mancham overthrown in bloodless coup.

July

4 **Pakistan** Army takeover under General Zia ul-Haq.

1978

April

27 **Afghanistan** Daoud government overthrown in coup; Noor Mohammed Taraki comes to power at head of Marxist regime.

1979

July

Sri Lanka State of emergency in response to Tamil revolt.

September

17 **Afghanistan** Taraki ousted by Hafizullah Amin.

November

21 **Pakistan** US embassy in Islamabad burnt down.

December

24 **Afghanistan** Soviet aircraft deliver combat troops to Kabul airport as five divisions mass on frontier.

27 **Afghanistan** Amin killed in Soviet assault on presidential palace. Babrak Karmal flown in by Soviets to take his place.

1980

January

1 **Afghanistan** Soviet force of some 60,000 men in the country; fighting continues throughout the year.

## EAST ASIA

1976

September

9 **China** Death of Mao Tse-tung.



## 1978

### May

11 **China and Soviet Union** Troops clash on the Ussuri River.

### June

5 **China** halts aid to Vietnam.

### August

12 **China and Japan** sign treaty of peace and friendship.

## 1979

### January

28 **China** Deputy prime minister Deng Hsiao-ping begins official visit to the United States.

### October

26 **South Korea** President Park assassinated.

## MIDDLE EAST

## 1976

### April

9 **Lebanon** Syrian regular troops intervene in Lebanese civil war to prevent a Muslim/Palestinian victory.

### July

3-4 **Israel** mounts a successful rescue mission to Entebbe, Uganda, where Israeli passengers on a hijacked Air France flight are being held hostage by West German and Palestinian terrorists.

### November

15 **Lebanon** Syrian troops enter Beirut as guarantors of an Arab peace agreement to end the civil war; fighting subsides.

## 1977

### July

21 **Libya and Egypt** engage in border clashes.

### November

22 **Israel** President Sadat of Egypt addresses the Israeli Knesset in Jerusalem.

## 1978

### February

19 **Cyprus** Egyptian commandos unsuccessfully storm a hijacked aircraft at Larnaca.

### March

14 **Lebanon** Large-scale thrust by Israeli forces into the south of the country (Operation Litani).

22 **Lebanon** UN peacekeeping force (UNIFIL) despatched to the south Lebanon.

### June

13 **Lebanon** Israeli forces withdraw from south Lebanon.

24 **North Yemen** President Ghashmi assassinated.

26 **South Yemen** President Rubayi Ali deposed and executed by pro-Soviet opponents.

### September

5-17 **Egypt and Israel** Camp David summit during which Prime Minister Begin, President Sadat and President Carter devise a 'framework for peace'.

8 **Iran** Martial law declared in Tehran and 11 other cities after widespread demonstrations against the Shah.

28 **Israel** The Knesset approves the Camp David agreement.

### October

27 **Egypt and Israel** Begin and Sadat awarded Nobel Peace Prize.

### November

3 **Egypt** suspended from the Arab League.

### December

20 **Lebanon** Israel attacks Palestinian bases.

## 1979

### January

16 **Iran** The Shah leaves the country in the face of relentless mass demonstrations.

### February

1 **Iran** The Ayatollah Khomeini returns from exile.

16 **Iran** Pro-Shah generals executed.

## March

26 **Egypt and Israel** sign peace treaty in Washington.

31 **Malta** Final withdrawal of British Navy.

## April

1 **Iran** declared an Islamic Republic.

## October

23 **United States** Ex-Shah of Iran flown to New York for cancer treatment.

## November

4 **Iran** Students occupy the US embassy and take the staff hostage.

14 **Iran** United States freezes all Iranian assets.

## 1980

### January

27 **Israel and Egypt** reopen their border.

### April

9 **Lebanon** Israeli troops move in.

24-25 **Iran** US Delta Force carries out abortive attempt to free the embassy hostages in Tehran (Operation Eagle Claw).

### July

27 **Egypt** Death of ex-Shah of Iran.

## September

4 **Iran** attacks Iraqi border villages in escalation of border clashes.

22 **Iran** Start of Gulf War as Iraq invades Iran.

23-25 **Iran and Iraq** launch crippling air strikes against each others' oil refining installations.

## October

13 **Iran** Khorramshar falls to Iraqi forces; Abadan besieged by land.

## SOUTH AMERICA

## 1976

### August

1 **Trinidad and Tobago** gain independence within the Commonwealth.

## 1977

### August

11 **Panama** United States agrees to hand over the Canal to Panama by the year 2000.

## 1978

### August

7 **Honduras** Military coup.

## September

11 **Nicaragua** Martial law imposed through much of the country as Sandinista guerrillas increase pressure on government of General Somoza.

## November

24 **Bolivia** Military coup.

## 1979

### May

4 **El Salvador** Guerrillas seize French and Costa Rican embassies.

17 **Nicaragua** President Somoza flees to the United States leaving Sandinistas in control of the country.

## October

17 **El Salvador** Colonels seize power, impose martial law.

## November

1 **Bolivia** Military coup.

## 1980

### March

24 **El Salvador** Archbishop Romero assassinated at altar in San Salvador.

## AFRICA

## 1976

### February

9 **Angola** MPLA/Cuban forces capture UNITA 'capital', Nova Lisboa.

15 **Angola** FNLA/mercenary force finally driven from northern Angola by MPLA/Cuban advance; MPLA in effective control of the country.

13 **Nigeria** General Murtala Mohammed, head of state, assassinated.

## March

3 **Mozambique** closes border with Rhodesia, imposes sanctions.

## June

16 **South Africa** Rioting in black township of Soweto, Johannesburg.

## July

3-4 **Uganda** Israeli airborne troops rescue hostages from Entebbe airport.

## 1977

### February

3 **Ethiopia** Lieutenant-Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam seizes power in palace coup.

24 **Ethiopia** United States halts arms supplies.

## March

10 **Zaire** Shaba Province invaded by Katangese gendarmes from Angola.

## July

24 **Somalia** launches full-scale invasion of the Ogaden area of Ethiopia.

## September

12 **Ethiopia** Somali forces capture Jijiga.

## October

18 **Somalia** Rescue of Lufthansa flight hostages at Mogadishu by West German GSG9.

## November

4 **South Africa** UN security council imposes mandatory arms embargo.

26 **Ethiopia** Soviet airlift of Cuban troops and weapons to aid Ethiopia in the Ogaden War.

## 1978

### February

7 **Ethiopia** launches major offensive in the Ogaden.

## March

9 **Somalia** announces total withdrawal from Ethiopian territory.

## May

1 **Angola** Major incursion by South African troops.

12 **Zaire** Second invasion of Shaba from Angola.

18-25 **Zaire** French legionnaires paratroop into Kolwezi to rescue white hostages and defeat Shaba invasion.

## July

10 **Mauritania** Coup brings Lieutenant-Colonel Salek to power.

30 **Mozambique** South African troops attack guerrilla bases.

## August

30 **Namibia** UN plan for Namibia accepted by SWAPO, rejected by South Africa.

## 1979

### April

11 **Uganda** Kampala occupied by force of Tanzanian troops and Ugandan exiles; Amin overthrown.

## June

4 **Ghana** Flight-Lieutenant Rawlings takes power in military coup.

## September

5 **Rhodesia** launches ground and air attacks into Mozambique.

20 **Central African Republic** France overthrows 'Emperor' Bokassa and installs David Dacko as president.

## December

21 **Rhodesia** Treaty on preparations for independence signed at Lancaster House in London.

## 1980

### March

4 **Rhodesia/Zimbabwe** Robert Mugabe's ZANU party wins overall majority in elections.

## April

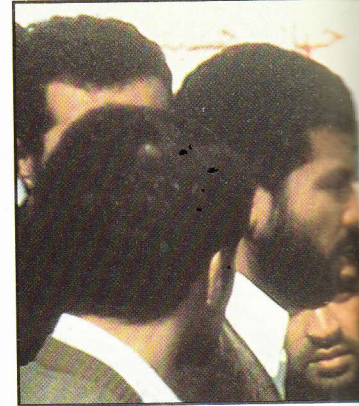
18 **Zimbabwe** becomes independent state.

## June

16-19 **South Africa** Serious rioting in Soweto.



# America defied



Left: Militant Islamic students burn the American flag on the roof of the US embassy in Tehran, November 1980. The students seized the embassy and took 66 US citizens hostage, demanding the return of the Shah to face a revolutionary tribunal.

## The Iranian hostage crisis

On Sunday, 4 November 1979 some 400 militant Islamic students occupied the United States embassy in Tehran, capital of Iran, and took 66 American citizens hostage. Three more US officials on a visit to the Iranian Foreign Ministry were also taken prisoner. The occupation appears to have surprised not only the Americans – who had not long before abandoned on grounds of cost a plan to ‘harden’ the embassy compound – but also the revolutionary leaders themselves. Nevertheless, Ayatollah Khomeini and his allies in the Islamic Republican Party (IRP) were quick to back the action of the students, seizing the opportunity that it presented to undermine the liberal government headed by Prime Minister Bazargan and push forward their project of institutionalising the power of the Islamic clergy.

Anti-American fervour, fomented by the revolutionary clergy, had run high in Iran since the flight of the Shah and the collapse of the hated Pahlavi regime in the preceding February. Indeed, on 14 February, only three days after the fall of the Pahlavi government, the American embassy had been briefly occupied by Fedayeen-e-Khalq guerrillas. Since the end of the first occupation the American diplomats had been ‘protected’ by a contingent of Revolutionary Guards who were, however, disavowed by the government.

On 22 October the ailing fugitive Shah was admitted to the United States to receive medical treatment, and this provided the militant students with their immediate pretext for the seizure of the hostages. In return for freeing them, the students demanded that the US return the ‘treacherous Shah’ to Iran to stand trial, rejecting any possibility of negotiation. The US government had maintained relations with Bazargan’s government throughout this period in the hope that it would be able to survive the pressures of Islamic fundamentalism, but in the aftermath of the occupation Bazargan resigned and the Revolutionary Coun-

cil, an alliance of Islamic factions, took over the government. The new government confirmed that they were not prepared to negotiate the release of the hostages; in theory at least the students occupying the embassy were acting independently. The Americans were therefore obliged to try to negotiate with the students through intermediaries.

US President Jimmy Carter had publicly rejected any notion of military intervention to free the hostages (reduced in number to 53 in the embassy compound by the release of 13 people by 20 November) but with the American public clamouring for a solution to the crisis, and the 1980 presidential election on the horizon, it is hardly surprising that he did in fact consider the military option from the very beginning of the crisis. The US naval presence in the Gulf of Oman was stepped up and a special unit, Delta Force, under Colonel Charlie Beckwith, was charged with developing a plan to retake the embassy by force.

In 1962 Charlie Beckwith, as a young captain in the Green Berets, had been posted to Britain for a year to train with the SAS. He had been impressed with their counter-insurgency methods and on his return he had begun a campaign for a similar American unit to be set up. After seeing active service in Vietnam, Beckwith continued to press for an SAS-type unit to be set up with a counter-insurgency and counter-terrorist role, until finally in 1977 he was given command of a new detachment of Special Forces: the 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment – Delta. When the crisis broke in November 1979 Beckwith was given a chance to test his new force.

Although Beckwith’s men had been trained to assault buildings occupied by terrorists and free civilian hostages, none of this training had anticipated the immense problems presented by the situation in Iran. Instead of operating on friendly territory, Delta Force would have to move deep into the Iranian interior.







Above: The American hostages were subject to intense psychological pressure, and were often blindfolded and displayed before television cameras and anti-American crowds.

And any solution to the logistical difficulties would have to preserve the element of surprise – once American forces were detected in Iran there could be no mistaking their objective.

Early suggestions that Delta Force should parachute into Tehran or drive there in trucks from Turkey were dismissed as unrealistic. Helicopters would certainly be needed to evacuate the hostages once the embassy had been taken, and so it was decided to use them on the way in. Naval carrier-based RH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters with a long-range heavy-lift capability, piloted by Marines, could be launched from the Gulf of Oman, but despite their long range they would be unable to cover the whole distance to

Below: The occupied embassy became the focus for violent anti-American demonstrations which swept Iran in the wake of the Islamic revolution.



Tehran. A refuelling stop in the desert would have to be arranged.

At each stage of the planning of the operation – code-named Operation Eagle Claw – new difficulties emerged, and each solution made the operation more complex. To make matters worse, there was a shortage of good intelligence. When the crisis broke, there had been no American agents in Iran except those who were attached to the embassy and were now among the hostages. An ex-CIA agent, code-named 'Bob', was quickly briefed and inserted into Iran, followed by four more Department of Defense agents. But there was no time to train them properly and none of them was able to speak the main local language, Farsi. Nevertheless the quality of intelligence began to improve and Delta Force were able to build up a detailed picture of the buildings in the embassy compound. Not until late in the planning, however, was it discovered that all the hostages were being held in the Chancellery building. The American agents were also able to supply details of the dispositions of the Revolutionary Guards.

When Delta Force deployed to Egypt on 21 April 1980, after months of training, the 72-man team that had been agreed on in December had expanded to over 130, plus a detachment of Rangers to secure an airfield for the withdrawal. In addition to the Sea Stallion helicopters, eight in number, the operation involved C-130 transports, tankers and gunships, and two C-141 Starlifters with fighter cover for the final evacuation.

### Delta Force and 'Desert One'

The plan for Eagle Claw called for the Delta Force assault team to be landed at 'Desert One', a desert road 320 km (200 miles) southeast of Tehran, by three troop-carrying MC-130s accompanied by three EC-130 fuel tankers. Thirty minutes later they would be met by eight Sea Stallions launched from the carrier *Nimitz*. The assault force of 118 men and their equipment would be loaded onto the helicopters, and after the refuelling was complete Delta Force would be flown on to a hide-site near Tehran, arriving before sunrise. The helicopters were then to be moved to a second site and concealed to await the call to evacuate the Force and the rescued hostages. It was agreed that unless at least six of the Sea Stallions were available the operation would not be viable and would have to be aborted.

Meanwhile, Beckwith and his men would be led by two of the Department of Defense agents to a wadi some 8 km (5 miles) from the landing zone and spend the day in hiding. After sunset two of the agents would return with two vehicles. Six drivers from Delta Force would drive to Tehran, pick up six Mercedes trucks and return to the wadi while Beckwith carried out a reconnaissance. Finally, Delta Force would divide into separate elements and drive to Tehran by separate routes.

Sometime after 2300 hours the leading contingent would drive up to the embassy and take out two guard-posts with silenced handguns. Two elements of Delta, Red and Blue, following close behind, were tasked to climb over the embassy walls, secure different sections of the compound and free the hostages, killing any armed Iranians they encountered. Meanwhile, White Element was to secure the outside of the embassy and cover the withdrawal. The assault on the buildings in the compound would be signalled by a



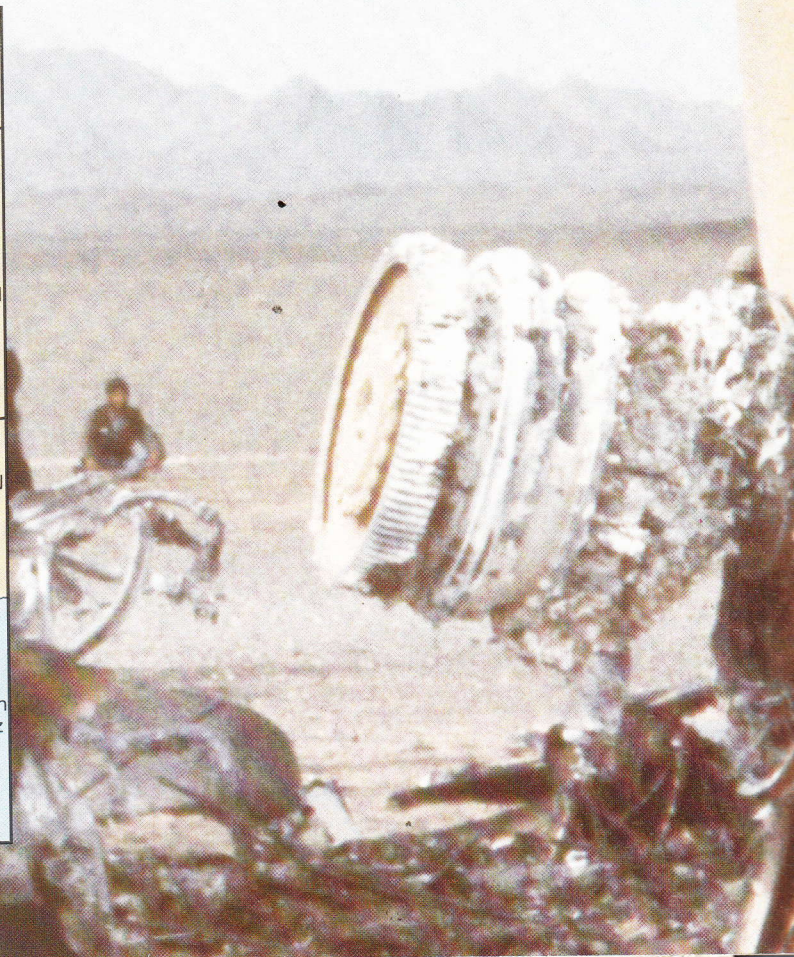
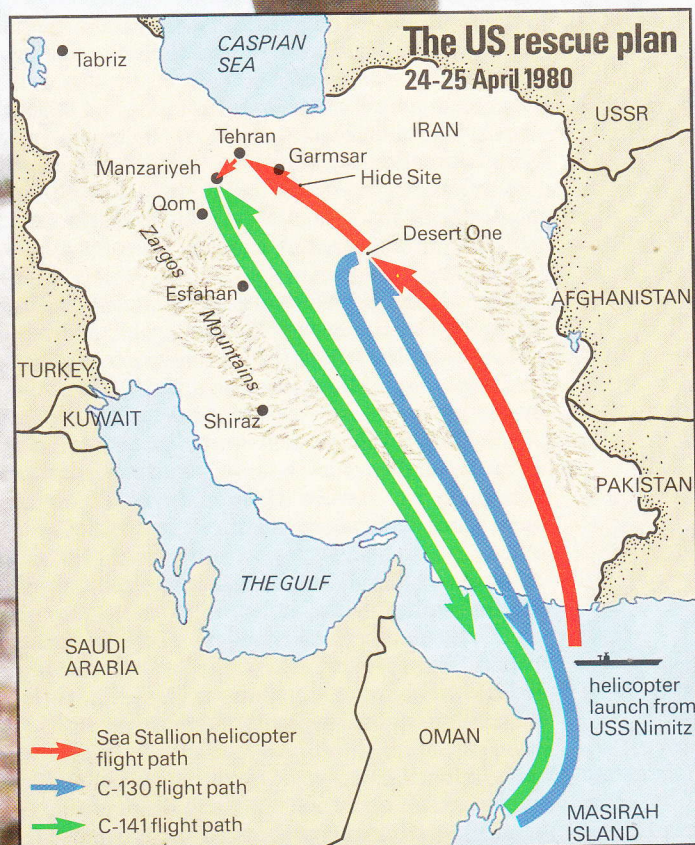


gigantic explosion as the wall of the compound was blown up. At approximately the same time a special 13-man assault team would attack the Foreign Ministry building and free the hostages there.

By now, the Sea Stallion helicopters would be circling to the north of Tehran and at a signal from Delta's air officer they were to begin landing either in the compound or in a nearby soccer stadium. The whole operation would be covered from above by two C-130 gunships whose massive firepower could be called down to halt any response by the Iranian armed forces. The Sea Stallions were to ferry hostages and assault teams to Manzariyeh airfield, 55km (35 miles) to the south, where a contingent of US Rangers would be defending a flight of C-141 Starlifters waiting to airlift everyone out of Iran.

The plan was almost unbelievably complex, and yet everyone involved thought that it could work. The go-ahead was given and Delta Force was air-lifted to the island of Masirah in the Gulf of Oman on Thursday, 24 April. At 1630 hours, dressed in Levi's and black field jackets, Delta Force boarded the C-130 transports. An hour and a half later the first aircraft took off and set its course for Desert One.

The first stage of the operation went smoothly. The aircraft successfully eluded the Iranian ground radar system and the leading transport landed at Desert One; the Ranger Road Watch Team deployed and secured the flanks of the site and Delta Force moved into position. Then, unexpectedly, a large civilian Mercedes bus arrived along the road with its headlights blazing. Blue Element surrounded it as Beckwith fired a shot at one of its tyres. The passengers were ordered off, searched and placed under guard. As a second Ranger force was deploying to the west of Desert One, another civilian vehicle, a petrol tanker, drove up. One of the Rangers fired an M72 Light Anti-tank Weapon, and the tanker burst into flames.





Left: Sikorsky RH-53 Sea Stallion helicopters on the deck of USS *Nimitz* prepare to take part in the hazardous mission to free the US hostages. Below left: Colonel Charlie Beckwith, Delta Force commander, who led the rescue operation. Main picture: The burnt-out wreckage of a C-130 destroyed in a collision with a Sea Stallion at 'Desert One' inside Iran. By the time this collision took place—killing eight men—Delta Force had already abandoned the hostage rescue bid. Below right: The hostages, released as the result of a negotiated settlement in January 1981, returned to a hero's welcome in the United States.

A truck drove up behind the tanker and the tanker driver jumped out of his blazing vehicle, got into the truck, and was driven off at speed. The Road Watch Team failed to stop it.

The remaining troop-transport and 'fuel-birds' arrived one by one and Delta Force deployed and settled down to wait for the helicopters. They were due to arrive in 30 minutes. After an hour there was still no sign of them and it was clear that Delta would be unable to reach the hide-site before first light, which was due at 0530 hours. After an hour and a half the first helicopter arrived; five more appeared during the next 30 minutes. The last two never arrived at all. The helicopters had encountered appalling dust storms, which had caused the delay. The two that failed to arrive suffered mechanical and electrical failures.

There was now no margin for error: with only six helicopters, the operation depended on every one of them. Although the risk of discovery was mounting every minute, Beckwith decided to continue. The Sea Stallions were refuelled and loaded. Delta was ready to move out of Desert One, and then, with the operation already ninety minutes behind schedule, Beckwith was told that only five of the helicopters were flyable. Eagle Claw was doomed and Beckwith ordered a withdrawal.

The withdrawal plan was for everyone to off-load and rejoin the C-130 transports. The five Sea Stallions would then fly back to the *Nimitz*. At 0230

hours preparations were complete. The C-130 pilots had started to gun their engines when the first helicopter lifted off. As the wind gusted around, the helicopter banked to the left, slid backwards and hit the C-130 with Blue Element on board, before bursting into flames. A huge conflagration ensued with flames reaching far into the sky and Redeye missiles exploding in all directions. Miraculously, all of Blue Element managed to disembark as the C-130 caught fire. Eight men crewing the C-130 and the Sea-Stallion were killed. Boarding the remaining aircraft, Delta Force swiftly abandoned Desert One, leaving five helicopters intact on the ground.

The failure of the mission was a humiliation for the United States and especially for President Carter. When the Shah died in July 1980 the immediate issue behind the hostage-taking was resolved, but the revolutionary students announced further conditions. They sought the return of the Shah's assets in the US to Iran and a series of humiliating apologies and undertakings on the part of the US government—conditions that President Carter was unable to meet.

Nevertheless, the crisis was finally resolved by negotiation in January 1981, after an agreement was reached between the US and Iran in Algiers. The hostages returned to the United States, to a hero's welcome. So not only had the 'military solution' proved a disastrous failure—it had in the final analysis proved unnecessary. It is, of course, impossible to say with certainty if the operation could possibly have succeeded, but a plan of such complexity inevitably risks failure. In the event, it was the use of helicopters—notoriously unreliable aircraft at any time—in desert terrain where they were all the more likely to fail, that resulted in a disaster that probably cost Jimmy Carter the presidency.

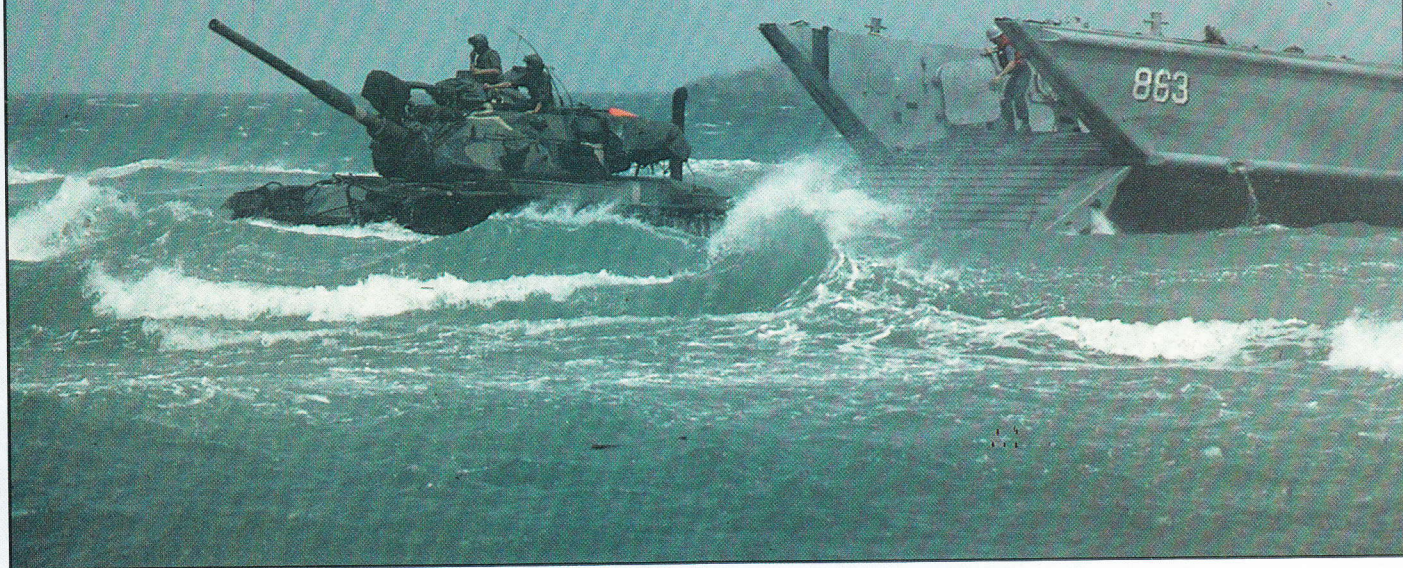
**Barry Smith**





# Rapid deployment

The US prepares for intervention in the Gulf



The idea of a quick-reaction military force, capable of worldwide deployment, had first been suggested by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara during the Kennedy administration. McNamara had drawn the essential lesson of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis that advantage in sub-nuclear superpower confrontations went to the side which could deploy a decisive local conventional military superiority. Such a capability would also help prevent an escalation of such confrontations to the nuclear level.

It was not until 1977, however, when President Jimmy Carter issued a directive (Presidential Directive No. 18 – PD18) to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that the first practical steps were taken to create such a force. In the general mood of post-Vietnam depression there was much opposition to this initiative, and progress was at first slow. The rapid deterioration of relations with the Soviet Union during the late 1970s and the Iranian revolution of January 1979, which overthrew the United States' closest and most important ally in the Gulf region, provided the context for a more active application of PD18, however. In August 1979 the Joint Chiefs produced proposals for the establishment of a unified operational command aimed at the development of a force ready to respond to threats to US interests in the Gulf.

Events in the region proceeded apace. The seizure of the US embassy hostages in Tehran on 4 November 1979 created a mood of extreme hostility to Iran which swept the United States during the winter of 1979-80. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979, added to the anti-American hysteria of Khomeini's Iran, seemed to pose a direct threat to Western oil supplies from the Gulf and to the stability and security of pro-Western countries there. President Carter's State of the Union message on 21

January 1980 contained a clear commitment to the security of the Gulf, and indicated a US readiness to defend its interests there by military force if absolutely necessary.

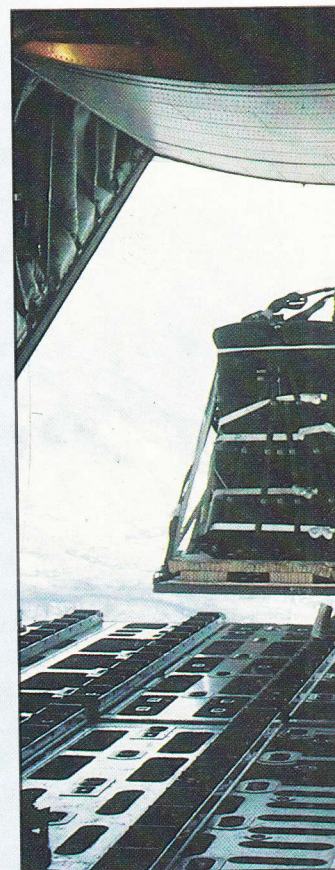
On 1 March 1980, the headquarters of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) was set up at McDill air force base, Tampa, Florida, in bunkers previously occupied by the Strategic Air Command. McDill was also the headquarters of the US Readiness Command (REDCOM) to which the RDJTF was subordinated. The first commander of the RDJTF was Lieutenant-General Paul X. Kelley of the US Marine Corps, later to command the United States contingent in Beirut.

## A unified command

At first the RDJTF was little more than a skeleton HQ, but by 10 October 1981 it had been transformed into a separate task force with joint command and control of forces designated to it, and on 1 January 1983 the RDJTF became a separate unified command. Known as the US Central Command (CENTCOM), theoretically equal in status to the European and Pacific commands, it had a 977-strong HQ organisation and was responsible for all military operations in the Southwest Asian theatre.

From the beginning, the RDJTF faced special difficulties inherent in the task it had to fulfil. The essential problem was how to transport a sufficient number of highly trained, well equipped men from the continental United States where they were based to Southwest Asia rapidly enough to counter any local or external threat to stability. The sheer distances involved in such an enterprise and the magnitude of the resources required would have defeated any other nation than the United States. Logistics were the main

Above: A US Marine M60 tank practising an assault landing during exercises in the Middle East.







limitation to operations, and therefore occupied a central position in RDJTF planning.

In US Fiscal Year 1983, the US Military Airlift Command (MAC) and Tactical Air Command (TAC) had some 512 C-130 Hercules, 234 C-141 Starlifters, 70 C-5 Galaxies and 12 KC-10 Extenders, to which could be added some 109 cargo and 215 passenger aircraft of the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF). Nevertheless, it was still only possible to airlift 30 per cent of the RDJTF's sole quick-reaction paratroop unit, the 82nd Airborne Division, at any one time to the Gulf region, and that only if stopover facilities were available at some friendly base along the way. The total payload of the MAC would not be capable of transporting the RDJTF-assigned 24th Infantry Division in less than five weeks, and once in action that division would need 1000 tonnes of supplies every day to remain combat-effective.

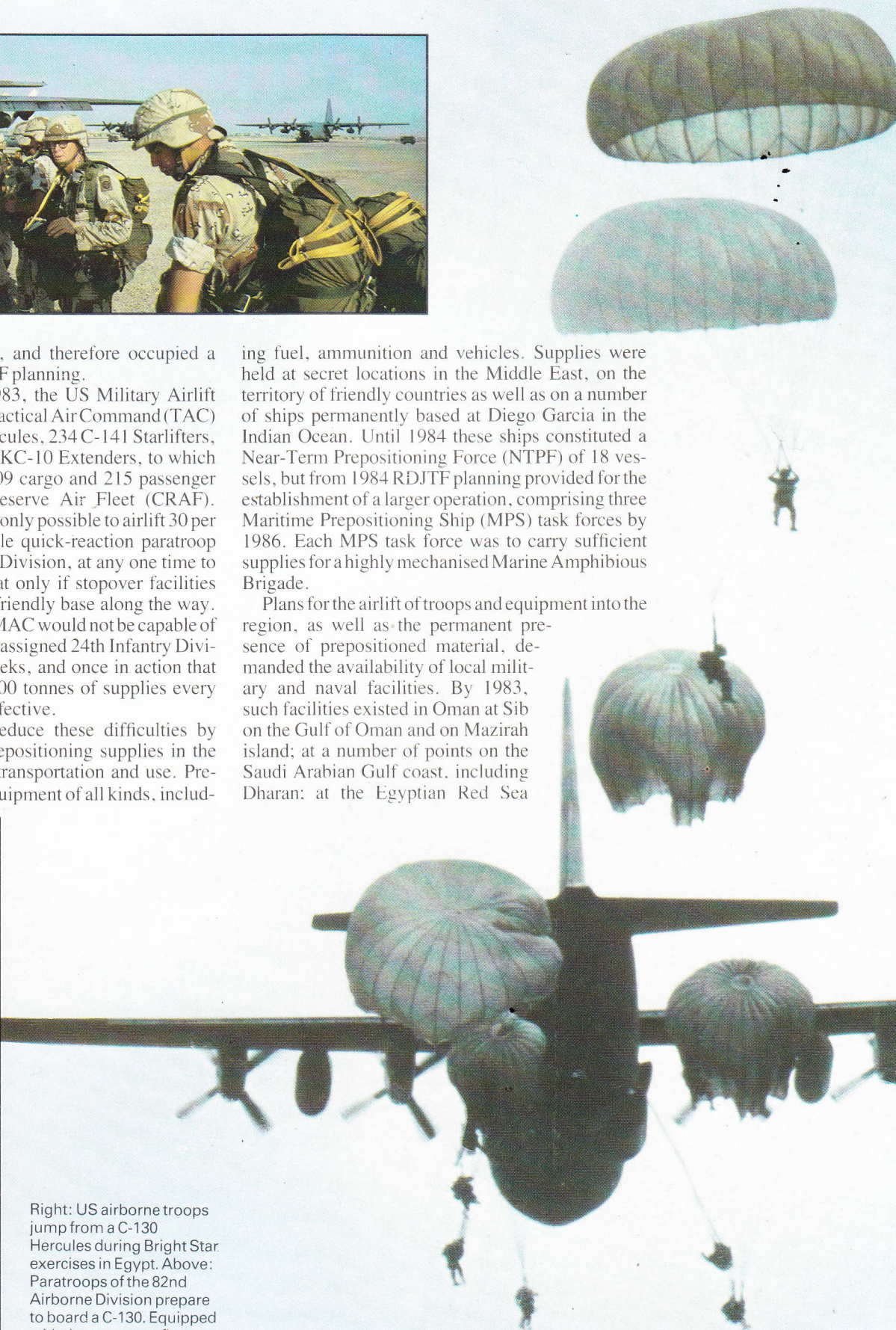
The US sought to reduce these difficulties by adopting a policy of prepositioning supplies in the region, ready for local transportation and use. Pre-positioning applied to equipment of all kinds, includ-

ing fuel, ammunition and vehicles. Supplies were held at secret locations in the Middle East, on the territory of friendly countries as well as on a number of ships permanently based at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Until 1984 these ships constituted a Near-Term Prepositioning Force (NTPF) of 18 vessels, but from 1984 RDJTF planning provided for the establishment of a larger operation, comprising three Maritime Prepositioning Ship (MPS) task forces by 1986. Each MPS task force was to carry sufficient supplies for a highly mechanised Marine Amphibious Brigade.

Plans for the airlift of troops and equipment into the region, as well as the permanent presence of prepositioned material, demanded the availability of local military and naval facilities. By 1983, such facilities existed in Oman at Sib on the Gulf of Oman and on Mazirah island; at a number of points on the Saudi Arabian Gulf coast, including Dharan; at the Egyptian Red Sea



Right: US airborne troops jump from a C-130 Hercules during Bright Star exercises in Egypt. Above: Paratroops of the 82nd Airborne Division prepare to board a C-130. Equipped with desert-camouflage uniforms and the new Kevlar helmet, they form the quick-reaction spearhead of the RDJTF. Left: An M113 APC being dropped by parachute during desert exercises.





port of Ras Banas and in the Western Desert; at Mombasa in Kenya; and Berbera and Mogadishu in Somalia. The key base for the RDJTF remained the British-owned island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, from which not only supply vessels but also carrier task forces and Strategic Air Command B-52s could operate.

While strategic and tactical airlift would supply RDJTF combat troops with logistic support in the short-term, and the MPS task forces in the medium-term, the long-term logistical back-up to operations in Southwest Asia would have to come from a greatly enhanced sealift capability routed around the Cape of Good Hope, and delivering men and material from the US East Coast in some 30 days. A Sealift Readiness Program was initiated in 1979, which provided for the gradual replacement of commercially-hired vessels with purpose-built ships, to include roll-on/roll-off container ships and fuel and water tankers. Sealift would also provide an alternative method of transporting troops to the Gulf, in vessels such as the SL-7 high-speed container ship.

### High-profile exercises

Each stage in the development of the RDJTF was accompanied by extensive and exhaustive exercises to test the logistical system under operational conditions, and to train the designated troops in the special techniques of warfare demanded by Southwest Asian conditions. These exercises were seen by the United



Above: US Army Sikorsky UH-60A Black Hawk helicopters transporting jeeps during Bright Star in the Egyptian desert. The RDJTF depends heavily upon the cooperation of allies in the Middle East to overcome its enormous logistical problems.

States not only as a routine military training programme, but as a demonstration to both allies and potential enemies that the RDJTF was an effective military force. RDJTF exercises were therefore high-profile political occasions, as well as a military necessity.

The first exercise combined both political and military aspects to an exemplary degree. Within a month of President Carter's 1980 State of the Union message, a Marine Amphibious Task Force, including four vessels, led by the amphibious assault ship USS *Okinawa* and carrying some 1800 men, left the Pacific for the Indian Ocean for manoeuvres with Carrier Task Force 70 on station in the Arabian Sea. Since then similar Marine Task Forces have been rotated to the Arabian Sea to maintain a permanent presence there. The operation was a clear signal of America's determination to defend its interests in the Gulf region by military force if necessary.

Subsequent exercises have taken place in the United States – in the California desert (Gallant Eagle, March 1982) and in Nevada (Reforger series) – and in the Middle East (Bright Star series and Jade Tiger). The first Bright Star exercise in November 1980 involved the deployment of 1400 troops of the 101st Air Assault Division and of the 502nd Infantry (24th Division) in Egypt for joint training with the Egyptian armed forces. Bright Star 82 saw the deployment of 6500 US troops in Egypt, and units of Rangers and Special Forces to Somalia and Sudan, while 1000 Marines were landed in Oman.

Joint exercises in the Middle East with friendly local forces immeasurably increased the combat readiness of RDJTF troops, and ironed out many problems arising from the adaptation of US equipment to the harsh conditions associated with desert warfare, but the high visibility of such operations, while demonstrating the seriousness of the American commitment to the region, also increased political pressures on Arab governments cooperating with the Americans. US backing for Israel left pro-Western Arab governments involved in RDJTF exercises or providing the RDJTF with base facilities open to internal criticism as being tools of Israel's most powerful ally. This problem has led to attacks on the RDJTF concept from some of the European NATO countries, who regard it as a further destabilising influence upon an already troubled region.

Robin Corbett

### Major forces available to the RDJTF

Units	Station
<b>US Army</b> (XVIII Airborne Corps) 82nd Airborne Division 101st Air Assault Division 24th Infantry Division (Mechanised) 6th Air Cavalry Brigade 9th Infantry Division	Fort Bragg Fort Campbell Fort Stewart Fort Hood Fort Lewis
<b>US Air Force</b> (HQ 9th Air Force) Seven tactical fighter wings (TFW), including 1st TFW (F-15 Eagles) 27th TFW (F-111Ds) 49th TFW (F-15 Eagles) 347th TFW (F-4E Phantoms) 354th TFW (A-10As) 366th TFW (F-111As)	Langley AFB Cannon AFB Holloman AFB Moody AFB Myrtle Beach AFB Mountain Home AFB
Strategic Projection Force 57th Air Division, SAC	Minot AFB
<b>US Navy</b> 3 Carrier Battle Groups	including one on-station in Indian Ocean
1 Surface Action Group 1 Amphibious Ready Group 5 Squadrons (P-3 Orions) Near Team Prepositioning Force	Diego Garcia
<b>US Marine Corps</b> Marine Amphibious Forces, including 1st Marine Division 7th Marine Amphibious Brigade (NTPF) 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing 1st Force Service Support Group	Camp Pendleton Camp Pendleton MCAS El Toro Camp Pendleton
Joint Warfare Task Force Rangers and Special Forces	JFK Center (Fort Bragg)



# Key Weapons

## AIR-TO-AIR MISSILES





## KEY WEAPONS

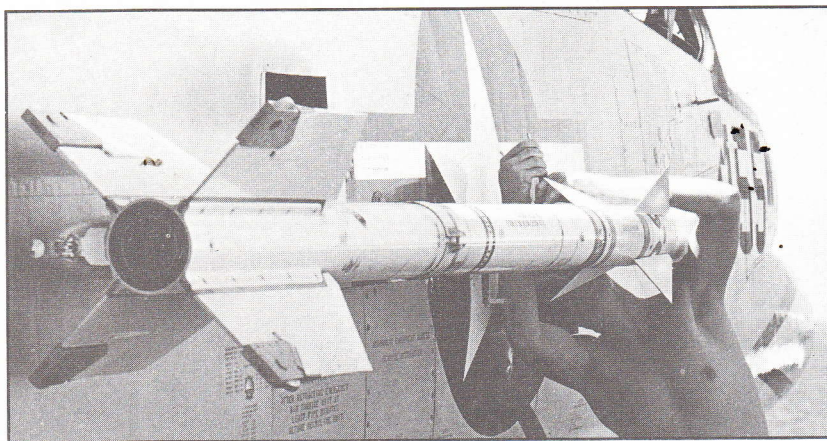
From its origins in the last years of World War II, the air-launched missile has become a fundamental element in aerial combat. Originally seen as primarily an interceptor's weapon, the class has diversified so that today missiles are found in the air-to-air, air-to-surface, anti-shipping and anti-tank roles.

Current air-to-air missiles (AAMs) can be subdivided by their means of guidance: the two most commonly employed systems are infra-red (IR) and semi-active radar (SAR) homing. Infra-red missiles (also known as heat-seeking missiles) are equipped with a seeker unit sensitive to the IR radiation generated by a target's engine exhaust and airframe. The first generation of IR missiles was affected by poor seeker discrimination and might home onto the sun or any other intense heat source instead of the true target. The missiles were restricted to firing into the rear arc of an aeroplane where the IR radiation generated by the target's engine exhausts was strongest. Current IR weapons have been designed to overcome these limitations; their seeker units respond only to the pattern of IR wavelengths associated with aircraft, and their increased sensitivity enables them to be launched even from directly head-on to a target and still lock on to the radiations – this is known as all-aspect capability.

Missiles with SAR homing require a radar on the launching aircraft to illuminate the target with radio waves; they then locate the target using an internal radio receiver that generates steering commands. The SAR weapon has the advantage of an all-weather capability and can engage targets beyond visual range, but the need for the launching aircraft to have its radar locked-on to the target throughout the missile's flight limits the number of targets that can be engaged by one aeroplane. To surmount this problem, the newest generation of radar-guided missiles is provided with its own integral radar seeker: the launching aircraft directs the missile towards its target, but in the final stage the missile's own radar takes over.

One of the most widely used IR air-to-air missiles is the American AIM-9 Sidewinder. Developed by the US Naval Weapons Center at China Lake, California, the Sidewinder first entered service in May 1956 and by 1983 a staggering total of 158,000 AIM-9s had been produced in 13 separate versions. The initial models, the AIM-9A and AIM-9B, were primitive by today's standards because of the poor sensitivity of their seeker units. Such missiles were the first AAMs to be used in combat, during clashes between Nationalist Chinese F-86s and communist Chinese MiG-17s over the Formosa Strait during 1958.

The development of the Sidewinder may be seen in terms of generations, each of which has improved the missile's performance. Following on from the initial models, the second generation comprised the AIM-9D to the AIM-9J and introduced a number of technical improvements on the original design; this generation achieved its highest degree of sophistication in the AIM-9H which brought solid-state electronics to the seeker unit, double delta control surfaces that give improved manoeuvrability, and a limited all-weather capability. In 1977, the AIM-9L launched the third generation of the Sidewinder and probably represents the ultimate development of the type. The AIM-9L can be recognised by its pointed delta control surfaces and is the first all-aspect and all-weather member of the family. The type achieved considerable attention during the Falklands War



where it formed the primary armament of the Royal Navy's Sea Harriers and was responsible for the majority of the 25 kills credited to the aeroplane.

The AIM-7 Sparrow is the dominant SAR missile in the air forces of the United States and its allies. Starting life as Project Hot Shot in 1946, the missile entered service during 1956. The first model, known as the AAM-N-2 Sparrow I, used a 'beam riding' guidance system, following the radar beam locked-on to the target by the launch aeroplane's radar. Sparrow I only saw limited service and it was with the Sparrow III that the AIM-7 came into wide-scale use.

Sparrow III switched to SAR guidance and entered service as the AIM-7C during 1958; the main production variant has been the AIM-7E, some 25,000 of which have been built. The AIM-7E has seen considerable combat service, notably in Vietnam, but has proved to be far from the ideal missile. The Sparrow has been found to be unreliable and of less value in a

Previous page: An AIM-9J Sidewinder on the pylon of an F-5E belonging to a USAF 'Aggressor' squadron. Top: An AIM-9E is loaded onto an F-8C Crusader on an aircraft carrier off Vietnam in 1967. Above: This F-15 is carrying AIM-9Ls on its wingtips and AIM-7Fs under the fuselage.

Below: An F-15A of the 48th Fighter Interceptor Squadron fires its last AIM-7F. The AIM-7 Sparrow has not proved as successful as hoped in actual combat.





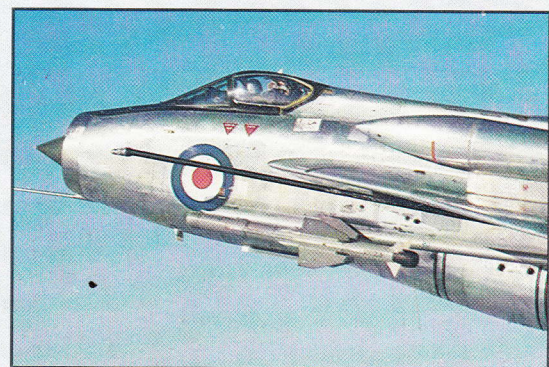
dogfight than the Sidewinder but despite its shortcomings it has been the subject of major development in both the UK and Europe.

In the UK, British Aerospace combined the AIM-7E airframe with a new monopulse seeker unit to produce a more effective weapon. Development of the 'UK Sparrow' began in 1969 and, as the Sky Flash, it entered service with the RAF during 1978. In American service the AIM-7E was superseded by the AIM-7F during 1977, but it was not until 1982 and the introduction of the AIM-7M that the US Air Force had a Sparrow which could match a Sky Flash.

The other important AAM to enter service during the 1950s, along with the Sparrow and Sidewinder, was the Hughes AIM-4 Falcon. It entered service in 1956 and was developed into eight versions, four of which employ SAR guidance and four IR. The basic design was further developed as the AIM-26 Super Falcon, two models of which were produced, the AIM-26A with nuclear warhead and the AIM-26B with a high explosive one. Both types were designed for the defence of the continental United States but the AIM-26B was also supplied to Sweden as the Rb27.

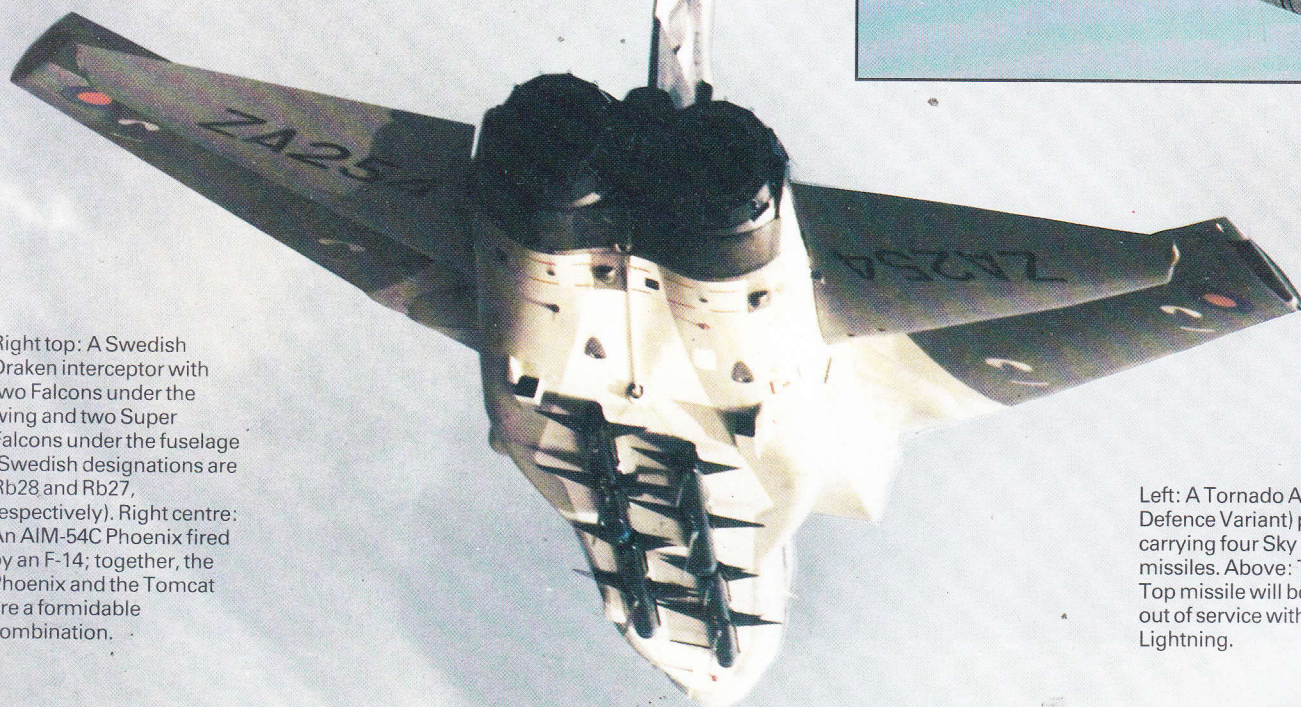
The Hughes AIM-54 Phoenix, which entered service in 1974 on the F-14As of the US Navy, began life in 1960 as a development of the Falcon. It is representative of the trend towards AAMs with greater range and less dependence on the launch aeroplane. In order to achieve the required range and independence, the Phoenix uses SAR guidance until it is within 20km (12.5 miles) of its target, when it switches to an on-board active radar for the remainder of the flight. When the AIM-54 is combined with the F-14A and its AN/AWG-9 fire-control system, it probably represents the most complex AAM system in service.

Some of America's Nato allies have produced their own AAMs. The first British AAM was the Firestreak, developed by de Havilland Propellers in conjunction with various official agencies. Entering service with the Royal Navy and the RAF in 1958, Firestreak carried a 23kg (50lb) warhead and used a relatively complicated IR system both for guidance and as a proximity fuze. During 1964, an improved Firestreak – Redtop – entered service combining an



Right top: A Swedish Draken interceptor with two Falcons under the wing and two Super Falcons under the fuselage (Swedish designations are Rb28 and Rb27, respectively). Right centre: An AIM-54C Phoenix fired by an F-14; together, the Phoenix and the Tomcat are a formidable combination.

Left: A Tornado ADV (Air Defence Variant) prototype carrying four Sky Flash missiles. Above: The Red Top missile will be phased out of service with the Lightning.





## KEY WEAPONS

improved seeker with an even larger warhead and it will remain in RAF service until the complete withdrawal of the Lightning interceptor.

In 1975 the Matra R550 Magic IR missile entered service with the French Air Force. Magic began development in 1968 and two versions of the basic weapon have appeared, with the Mk2 incorporating an improved seeker and new rocket motor. The R550 saw action during the Falklands War with the Argentinian Air Force and is also in service with the Iraqi Air Force against the Iranians.

One of the newest missiles in service is the Matra Super R530, developed from the earlier R530 which proved unsatisfactory in service. The R530 could use either IR or SAR guidance, depending on the seeker unit installed, but the Super R530 is restricted to SAR guidance. The Super R530 is produced in two versions, the F and the D: the former entered service on the Mirage F1 in 1980 and the latter is scheduled for introduction on the Mirage 2000 in 1986. The R530 and the Super R530 have done well in the export market and the R530 has been used operationally by

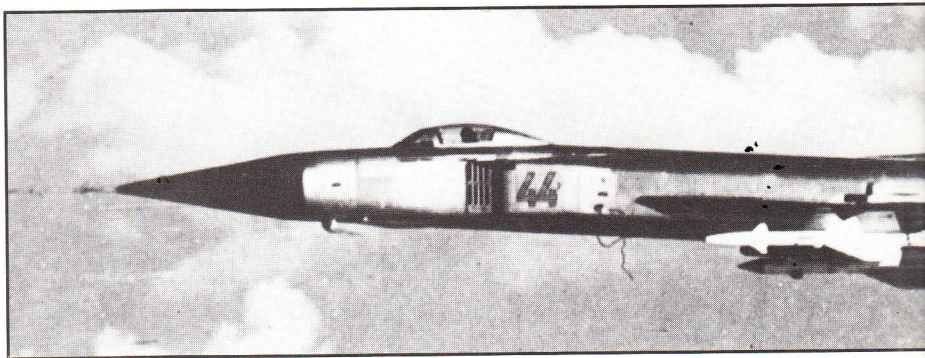
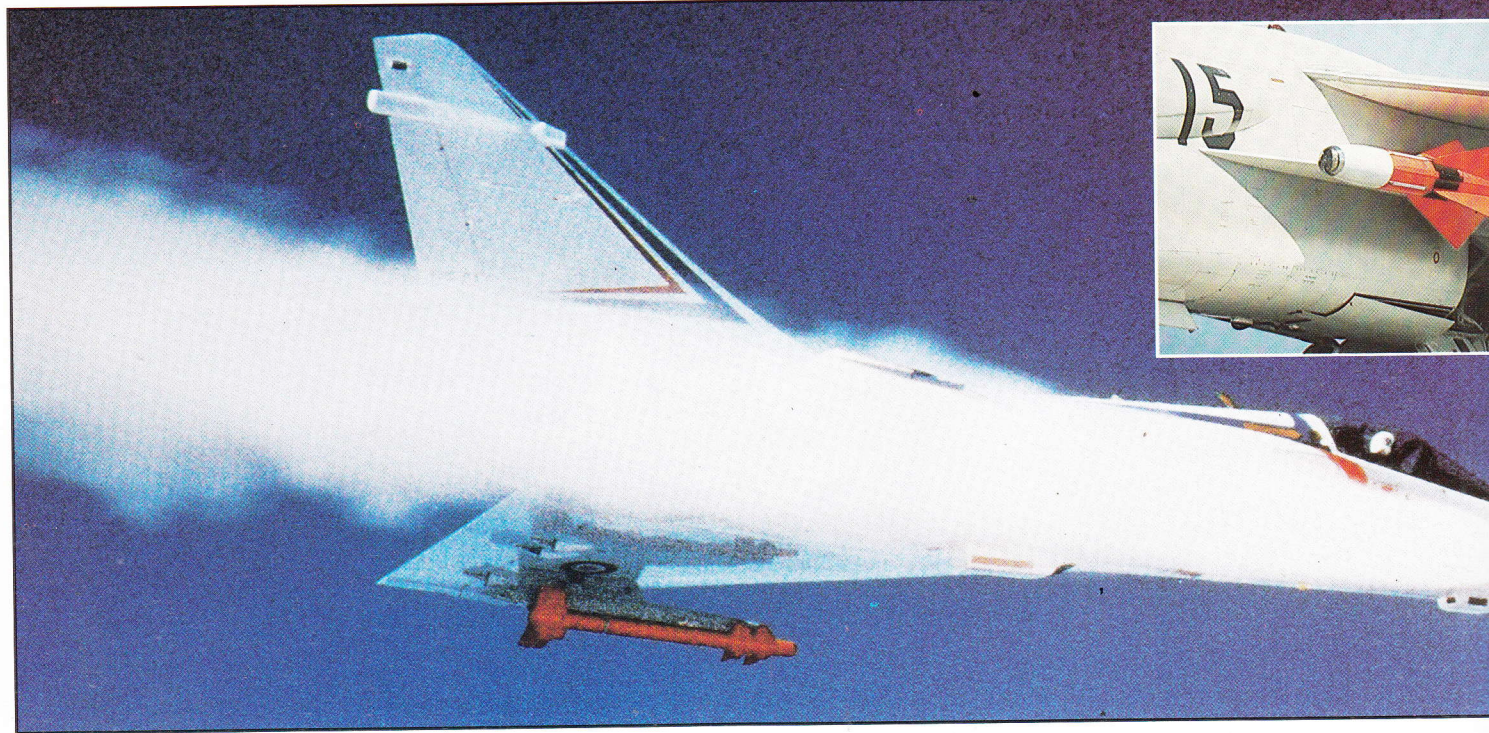
Argentina, Iraq, Israel and Pakistan.

In a programme similar to the British Sky Flash, the Italian firm of Selenia Industrie Elettroniche Associate has developed a multi-role missile using SAR homing, the Aspide. Although the configuration is the same as that of the AIM-7, the Aspide features a new motor, a new seeker unit and reconfigured nose, and control surface geometry. The Aspide entered

Right: A Mirage F1 carrying the R550 Magic on its wingtip and the Super R530F on its wing pylons.



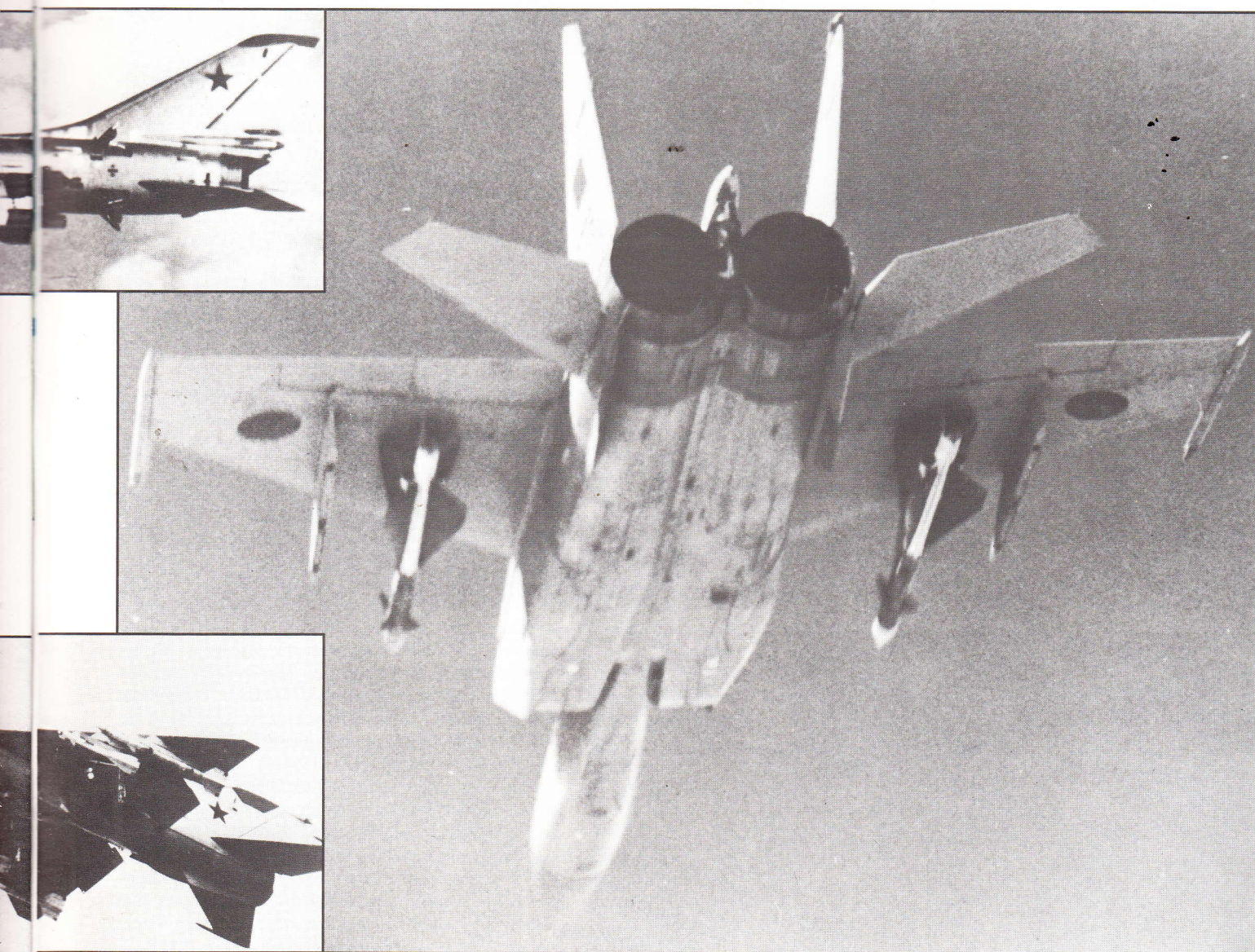
Below: An R550 flies away from the Mirage 2000 that has launched it. Inset: An R530 mounted on a French Navy F-8E Crusader



Above: An Su-15 armed with AA-3 missiles; it was this combination of aircraft and missile that shot down flight KAL 007 of Korean Air Lines in 1983. Right: Two AA-6s mounted on the wing pylons of a Libyan MiG-25. Below: A MiG-21MF carrying AA-2 missiles on the outer wing pylons and AA-8 missiles on the inner wing pylons.







service in 1978 and will replace the AIM-7 on the F-104S and possibly on the Tornado.

The Soviet Union introduced its first AAM in 1958; it was dubbed the AA-1 Alkali by Nato analysts. Development work on the missile probably began during 1950 and the mature weapon was used to arm both the MiG-17PFU and the MiG-19FM interceptors. There has been some disagreement over the type of guidance system used by the AA-1 but it is now generally believed to have used SAR or to have been a 'beam rider'; indeed, both systems may have been used as the weapon was developed in six separate models during its service life and it is common Soviet practice to employ different guidance systems in the same basic airframe. As far as is known, Alkali was withdrawn from frontline service in 1978 but it is believed to be still in use as a training round by the Soviet Air Force.

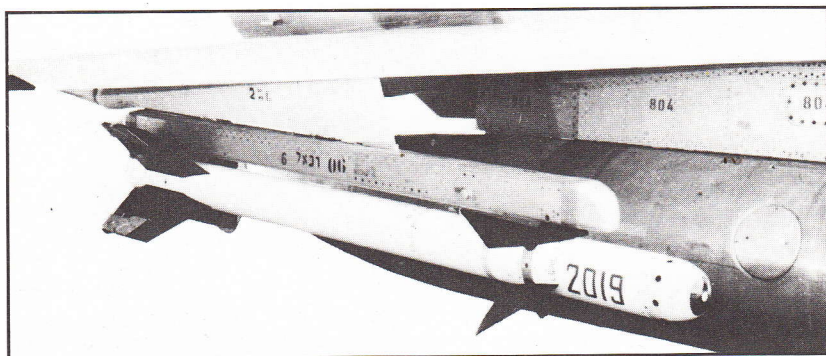
The second generation of Soviet AAMs entered service about 1961 and consisted of three types: the AA-2 Atoll, the AA-3 Anab and the AA-5 Ash. In its initial form the AA-2 was a straightforward copy of the American AIM-9B Sidewinder but it has followed its own path of development. Used primarily in the MiG-21, the Atoll has been built in very large numbers and produced in both IR and SAR forms. During

the early 1970s, Hindustan Aeronautics began producing IR models of the weapon under licence in India and there are also reports of a Chinese version. In 1967 a new variant was identified, known in the West as the AA-2-2 Advanced Atoll, part of a new generation of missiles using differently shaped and enlarged control surfaces; it also appears to have been developed in both IR and SAR forms. The Advanced Atoll is used on both late-model MiG-21s and a number of MiG-23 variants. As a whole, the AA-2 family is the most widely used Soviet AAM and examples of both generations are in service with the air forces of at least 29 countries.

The AA-3 Anab was the Soviet Union's first long-range, all-weather AAM and has been used on the Yak-28P, the Su-11 and the Su-15. Both IR and SAR versions have been developed, the SAR models using continuous wave target illumination generated by the Skip Spin fire-control system. A second generation Anab, the AA-3-2 Advanced Anab, was identified during 1972 and is still the primary armament of the 700 or so Su-15s which remain in service with the Soviet Air Defence Force.

The AA-5 Ash is a Soviet Air Defence Force-only weapon and is believed to have been developed specifically for use with the Tu-28P interceptor.





Above: The Shafrir's appearance demonstrates well its descent from the Sidewinder. Proven in combat, the Shafrir is fairly inexpensive in comparison with other missiles, costing only about \$20,000. The Shafrir is carried on Israeli Mirages, Neshers (like this one) and Kfirs.

Initial Ash models used SAR guidance, employing the Tu-28's Big Nose radar for target illumination, but by 1965 an IR model was introduced to complement the radar weapons and both models remain in service. This very large AAM was used to arm the earliest models of the MiG-25 Foxbat as well as the Tu-28.

The Soviet AA-6 Acrid entered service during 1970 and like the AA-5 appears to have been designed exclusively for a single aircraft type, in this case the MiG-25. The Acrid has been produced in both IR and SAR forms and has been supplied to Libya and possibly Algeria as well. The Acrid is now being withdrawn in favour of the AA-7 on the newest MiG-25, the Foxbat-E. The AA-7 was developed between 1971 and 1974 and represents the third generation of Soviet AAM; it has been developed in both IR and SAR versions. The radar version has an unusual fixed external reception antenna array in place of the more usual internal scanner. The AA-7 is most frequently seen on the MiG-23 in Soviet and allied air forces.

The AA-8 Aphid entered service in 1976 as a replacement for the Atoll family. A very compact weapon, the Aphid appears to have been developed in both IR and SAR forms and has been carried by the MiG-21, the MiG-23 and the Yak-36MP.

Outside Nato and the Warsaw Pact, the major producer of indigenous designs is Israel whose Rafael Armament Development Authority produces the Shafrir and its successor, the Python. These IR AAMs have seen considerable operational service. The Shafrir, based on the design of the early Sidewinder, entered service in 1969 and the Israeli Air Force has claimed 200 kills with the missile. In 1982 a development of the Shafrir, the Python, was used operationally for the first time during the invasion of the Lebanon; this new weapon features a more sophisticated seeker and is an all-aspect weapon. Armscor of South Africa have developed the V3 Kukri which has a helmet-mounted sight to designate the target, while CTA Instituto de Atividades Espaciais of Brazil are developing the Piranha; both of the missiles are IR seekers.

Developments in AAMs in the 1980s are tending towards ever more sophisticated and complex missiles. Missile engineers are now aiming to produce missiles with either a 'fire and forget' capability or 'look-down shoot-down' capability and preferably both. Fire and forget missiles have pre-programmed inertial guidance for the initial stages of flight and an active radar for homing onto the target. Look-down shoot-down capability is provided by installing missiles with radars which discern the Doppler effect of an aeroplane at a lower altitude and also suppress static echoes from the ground. The AIM-54 Phoenix is a look-down missile as is the Sparrow replacement in development (the Hughes AIM-120A); the Soviets now have an operational look-down missile – the AA-9 – and are developing the AA-X-10; both of these could be used against cruise missiles. Also under development in the United States is the Vought ASAT (Anti-SATellite) which could be launched by an F-15 against enemy satellites. All these high-technology missiles seem very impressive, but during the Vietnam War the AIM-7 Sparrow had a kill rate of about 10 per cent, and the Falcon could only achieve seven per cent.

### Nato air-to-air missiles

Type	Length	Speed	Range
AIM-9L Sidewinder	2.85m (112in)	Mach 2.5	17.7km (11 miles)
AIM-7E Sparrow	3.7m (144in)	Mach 4	44km (28 miles)
Sky Flash	3.7m (144in)	Mach 4	50km (31 miles)
AIM-4A Falcon	2m (78in)	Mach 2.8	8km (5 miles)
Firestreak	3.2m (125in)	Mach 3	8km (5 miles)
Red Top	3.3m (131in)	Mach 3.2	12km (7.5 miles)
AIM-54A Phoenix	4m (158in)	Mach 5	200km (124 miles)
R550 Magic	2.8m (109in)	Mach 3	10km (6 miles)
Aspide	3.7m (144in)	Mach 4	100km (62 miles)
Super R530	3.5m (139in)	Mach 4.6	35km (22 miles)

### Soviet air-to-air missiles

Type	Length	Speed	Range
AA-1 Alkali	1.9m (74in)	Mach 1	8km (5 miles)
AA-2 Atoll (IR)	2.8m (110in)	Mach 2.5	6.5km (4 miles)
AA-2 Atoll (SAR)	2.9m (114in)	Mach 2.5	6.5km (4 miles)
AA-3 Anab (IR)	4.1m (161in)	Mach 2.5	19km (12 miles)
AA-3 Anab (SAR)	4m (158in)	Mach 2.5	24km (15 miles)
AA-5 Ash (IR)	5.5m (216in)	Mach 3	21km (13 miles)
AA-5 Ash (SAR)	5.2m (204in)	Mach 3	55km (35 miles)
AA-6 Acrid (IR)	6.3m (248in)	Mach 4	25km (16 miles)
AA-6 Acrid (SAR)	5.9m (232in)	Mach 4	80km (50 miles)
AA-7 Apex (SAR)	4.6m (181in)	Mach 3	40km (25 miles)
AA-8 Aphid (IR)	2.2m (85in)	Mach 3	5.5km (3.5 miles)



# War in Peace

## The Fighting Men

### The Biafran Army



On 30 May 1967 Lieutenant-Colonel Chukwuemeka Ojukwu declared the independence of the predominantly Ibo Eastern Region of the Federation of Nigeria, creating the Republic of Biafra. It failed to attract widespread international recognition or support and, from the start, faced a Federal government under General Yakubu Gowon that was determined to reunite Nigeria whatever the cost. By January 1970, surrounded by three Federal divisions, which mustered over 60,000 men equipped with armoured cars, artillery, aircraft and virtually unlimited supplies, Biafra was forced to surrender. In retrospect, its demise seems to have been inevitable.

Yet the fact remains that Biafra did survive against apparently insuperable odds for nearly three years, fighting a bitter and destructive war which was not always one-sided. To a certain extent this was a result of Federal weaknesses – the Federal Army was often poorly led, tactically inept and too easily demoralised – but there was more to it than that, for there can be no doubt that Biafra defended itself remarkably well. At first glance this may seem surprising, for the Biafran Army was never large – barely more than 40,000 men at its height – and was poorly equipped, lacking heavy weapons, ammunition stockpiles and a modern air element. Moreover, for much of its existence it had to survive on inadequate supplies, receiving little from outside sources and depending to a significant extent on what it could capture from the enemy. On closer analysis, however, it is apparent that the Biafrans enjoyed certain hidden advantages which, although insufficient to ensure final victory, did prolong the war.

The first of these was the fact that the Ibo tribe contained within it a hard core of military expertise and experience which could be exploited. It has been estimated that over 50 per cent of the pre-1966 Nigerian Army officer corps was Ibo, and although a significant number of these men failed to survive the coups and massacres of 1966-67, enough remained to form the solid backbone of the new Biafran Army.

They were supported, moreover, by most of the Biafran population, who were willing to bear enormous sacrifices to defend their state. This could never act as a substitute for outside support, but it did mean that the army was never short of manpower and its morale remained high even under the most severe conditions of blockade and defeat. In addition, the energy and resourcefulness of the Ibo people was devoted to the war effort, producing rudimentary military equipment and home-made weapons which sustained the frontline forces when all else failed. In this they were aided by some very capable white mercenaries, notably 'Colonel' Rolf Steiner, who raised the Fourth Biafran Commando Brigade in 1968, and Count Carl Gustav von Rosen, who flew Swedish-built Minicon light aircraft against Federal targets with demoralising effect in 1969. Finally, as the Federal forces closed in, the Ibos began to operate on their own territory and this enabled them to move



*Top: Biafran soldiers who are manning an outpost along the Niger River; they are armed with a variety of small arms. The skull belongs to a northern Nigerian. Above: Biafran soldiers near Owerri form up for inspection of their machine guns. Both of these groups of soldiers are exceptionally well-equipped for the Biafran Army, which found it difficult to acquire sufficient munitions.*

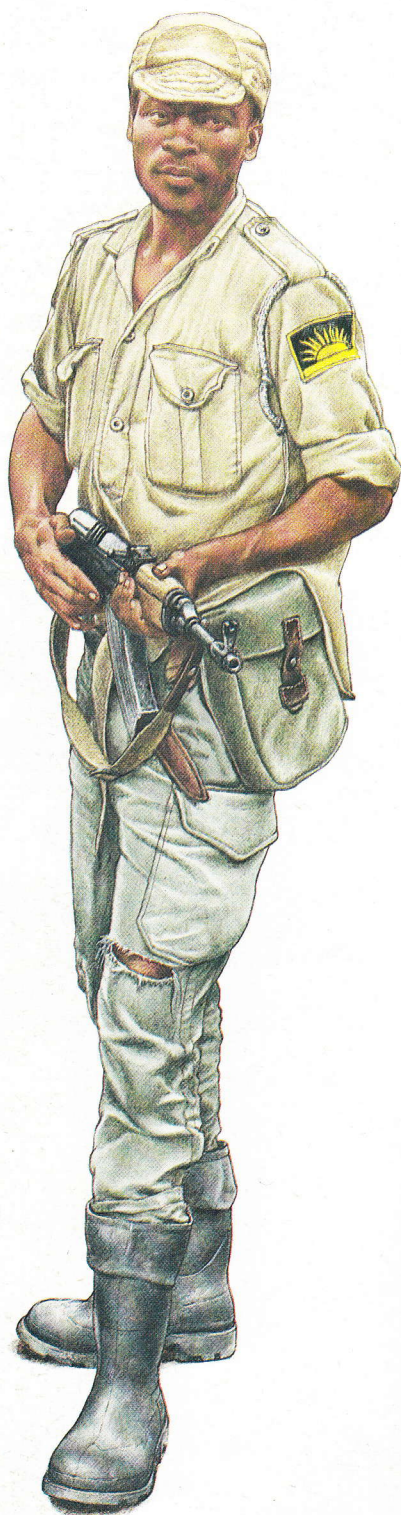
swiftly across terrain which their enemy, who were tied to the roads and tracks by heavy dependence on modern weapons, often regarded as impassable.

Taken together, these advantages read like a recipe for guerrilla warfare, and it was perhaps one of the weaknesses of Biafran strategic thinking that such operations were not carried out on a more regular basis. To begin with, Ojukwu wasted valuable manpower and resources on conventional military operations such as the invasion of the Mid-Western Region of Nigeria in August 1967, and it was only after these had failed completely in 1968-69, defeated by the growing numerical strength of the Federal forces, that he took the advice of Steiner and adopted guerrilla tactics. By then it was already too late to save Biafra, but the fact that the Federal Army, suffering the effects of constant ambush and hit-and-run attacks, took another year to defeat its enemy, shows what could have been achieved. Biafra was, in the final analysis, unsuited to conventional warfare; to stand any chance at all of long-term survival, the army should have exploited its natural advantages of popular support, high motivation and extensive local knowledge.



# Biafran Soldier

## Nigeria 1967



Biafran soldier, Nigeria, 1968

The Biafran forces faced great difficulties in getting equipment. Virtually any sort of quasi-military tunic or trousers would be worn, either light khaki like this man's tunic, olive green like his trousers, jungle-pattern camouflage or even civilian clothes. Headgear could be berets, tropical hats or bush hats: this man is wearing a light khaki cap with earflaps which he has tucked up inside the crown. He has unconventional footwear – wellington boots – and is armed with a Czech 7-62mm vz 58 assault rifle together with the appropriate bayonet and ammunition pouches.

*Below: Newly trained troops soon to go into action are encouraged by their NCO. The Ibo soldiers had good morale throughout the war and enthusiastically supported the Biafran Republic.*

